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EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE
WINTHROP, IOWA



YOUNG GREAT HORNED OWL

This bird was from a nest a mile north of the one described in this article. Tom Kent caught it after a considerable chase, though it had apparently just left the nest and was too unsteady for sustained flight.

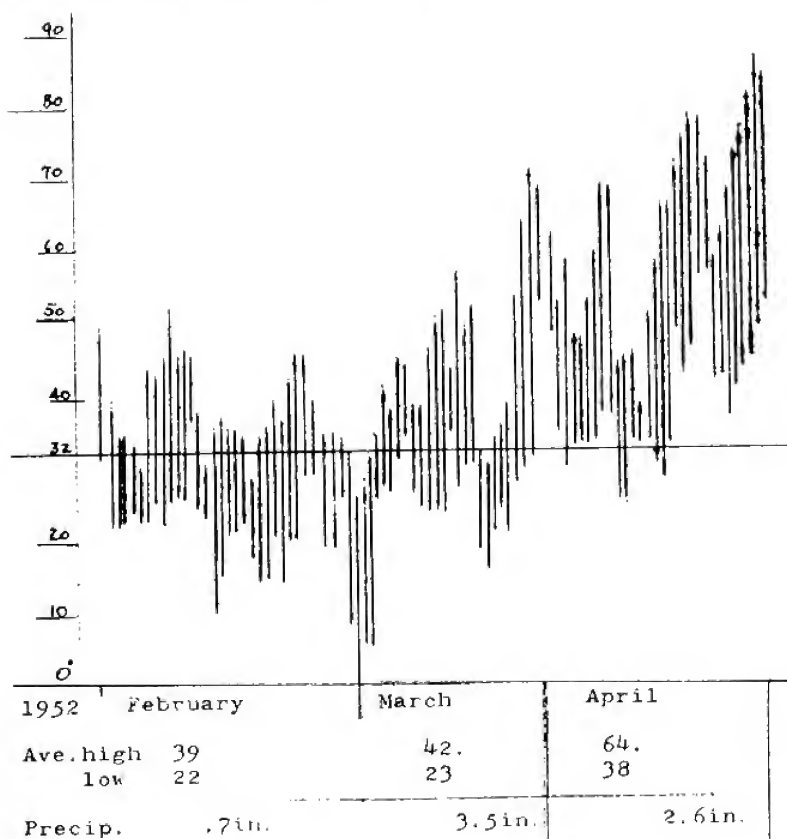
THE DIARY OF A GREAT HORNED OWL NEST

By FRED W. KENT

IOWA CITY, IOWA

(With photographs by the author and Tom Kent)

With the Great Horned Owl reported as a common Iowa resident, we found ourselves in the embarrassing situation of not having seen one for several years in this area, nor able to find one in spite of considerable effort to do so. When finally in 1952 we did find them, it was equally embarrassing to find that they were nesting in a patch of woods almost within our city limits. Later we found another nest about a mile away in a similar patch of semi-open woods, so perhaps we had not been looking in the right kind of habitat. Anyway, having found the nest early in February, we kept rather close watch of it and recorded our observations. Unfortunately, the nest was located so high in a tall black oak we were unable to reach it or to climb any nearby trees to check on the sequence of events. The total elapsed time of nesting and the action of the bird on the nest provides a pattern, this deviating from other reported cases only in the time the young remained in the nest (about five weeks instead of three).



GRAPH SHOWING TEMPERATURE FLUCTUATIONS AND PRECIPITATION DURING THE PERIOD OF OBSERVATION OF THE GREAT HORNED OWL NEST.

The nest was a large, flat, stick structure about 70 feet from the ground in one of the topmost forks of a black oak. By the time the young left the nest it had become a bit ragged and tilted.

Dec. 30, 1951. Great Horned Owl seen in woods (Christmas bird count).

Jan. 27, 1952. Two Great Horned Owls in woods.

Feb. 3. We again saw both owls; one flushed from the nest.

Feb. 9. Again found both owls, but the one on the nest would not flush.

Feb. 17. Found both owls, but the one on the nest would not flush.

Feb. 23. One owl on nest; head and ears easily seen above the flat nest from several angles.

March 1. Owl on nest, but would not fly off in spite of much activity on the part of the boys who climbed half way up a nearby tree (took two hours).



THE GREAT HORNED OWL NEST

About 70 feet from the ground in the top of an oak tree. The outline of the incubating owl's head and ears may be faintly seen in the picture.

The owl's mate had flown from a nearby tree; from the many droppings and pellets under this tree, it appeared to be a regular perch.

March 9. Owl flushed from the nest but returned as soon as we moved on. Had the eggs hatched?

March 16. Same performance as above, with the other owl not far away.

March 22. Same performance. We found that we could tell about when the bird would come back to the nest by distance we walked away — about 100 yards.

March 29. Both owls were present, and this was the first time we could see the young.

March 30. Saw both owls and two young.

April 1. Adult owl on nest but flushed as we approached.



A COLD, HARD STARE — OWL PORTRAITURE AT ITS BEST

This adult Great Horned Owl was an injured bird brought in to the museum at about the time the nesting was going on.

April 3. One adult near. Young showed quite white above the nest.
April 6. Both adults near. Young sitting up.
April 15. No adults present. Young owls looking out of the nest.
April 20. One adult owl found in the woods.
April 24. One adult seen in the woods. Young looked darker.
April 26. One adult seen in the woods. One young noticeably larger.
April 27. Young were sitting up but as we got nearer they flattened down in the nest.

May 1. No adults seen and only one young in the nest.

May 3. Same comment as May 1.

May 4. Same comment as May 1. Bob Vane saw the other young owl in a nearby tree.

May 5. The nest was empty. We could not find adults or young, but the trees were almost in full leaf due to unusually warm weather in late April (temp. in 90's).

People living just across the river from this patch of timber reported hearing many nightly owl calls and hoots at this period. Careful examination of the ground under the nest as the young got older disclosed many droppings but no pellets. Remains of a female Red-winged Blackbird with skin almost intact, a Flicker feather and several pigeon feathers were the only evidences we could find of the owls' feeding on any particular species. At no time did the owls show any aggressiveness or concern for their young. Perhaps they would have attacked us if we had climbed near the nest, but they always slipped quietly away as we approached. We would have missed them on two occasions had not the Crows informed us where they were. Once when the Crows were loitering in the vicinity of the nest, we saw one parent owl draw the Crows across the river by getting them to follow it in the usual pursuit formation. With one owl holding their attention on the opposite side of the river, the mate was able to return to the nest in peace.

MY BOYHOOD WITH BIRDS

By WILLIAM YOUNGWORTH

SIoux CITY, IOWA

Bon Homme and Charles Mix Counties, South Dakota, became my roaming area from early boyhood until I was nearly 13 years of age. There the creeks still ran steadily and the small lakes and potholes abounded in waterfowl and bullheads. It was South Dakota before the dust bowl era. Clear Lake, Mueller's Lake and Merkle's Lake were all located near our home in Tyndall, and not far off was fabulous Lake Andes, which to the small boy was a lake to dream about. This lake attracted black bass fishermen from far distant states; it was the mecca for bass fishermen in this whole area. We usually made one trip there each summer, with neighbors, and always came home loaded down with sunfish and bullheads which we had caught. We left the bass and the pike to the old fishermen.

Coming from a line of hunters, my grandfather Youngworth of nearby Scotland, South Dakota, was a confirmed duck hunter, and from what I learned later, a very able wing-shot. My father made a break from his banking business to go duck hunting or fishing at every opportunity; it was only natural that I should have an intense interest in wildlife.

Prairie Chickens and Quail were very common in the area in the early 1900's, because as we know now, when the prairie sod was first broken, it proved to be a boon to these birds. They increased rapidly for a short time and then the press of settlement quickly wiped out the false increase. The Prairie Chicken has about disappeared from the area, even as a winter

migrant, and the Quail will never again increase enough to warrant a hunting season.

My mother tells that once or twice a season my father and a neighbor or two would go out for a Prairie Chicken shoot and come home with the box of the spring wagon full of birds. And as for the Quail, Mother said that often after the bank closed for the day, Father and she would drive out a few miles from Tyndall and with the aid of Father's Llewellyn setter, Roderick Dew, they would flush many coveys of Quail.

Our family circle was rudely broken by the death of my father, when I was not yet three years old. Spring hunting was allowed in those days and Father had taken off from work to go to his favorite Mueller's Lake for a duck hunt. After doing some jump-shooting and retrieving the birds by wading in after them, encumbered by his heavy hip-boots and all accoutrements, the effort and exertion proved too much for an overtaxed heart. He passed on beside his beloved duck lake, where I know he probably would have wanted to die, with the soft whisper of wings and the stirring call of the wild Mallard overhead.

When I was eight years old, my mother gave me my first bird book, "Birds Every Child Should Know," by Neltje Blanchan, and from then on I was in the bird-watching business for good. When I was eleven, she also gave me "The Children's Book of Birds", by Olive Thorne Miller, with its beautiful colored plates by Fuertes. At about this time, a Mrs. Anna L. Minier, then operator of Minier's Tavern, one of the finest small hostleries in South Dakota, gave me Reed's "Bird Guide". My interest in birds then increased by steady leaps.

Father, although a lover of sports, was also a lover of home. On the near-acre of ground which surrounded our home he planted a fine orchard. Among the several dozen apple trees were such old-time varieties as Wolf River, Duchess, Wealthy, Snow, crab and several others. We had numerous varieties of cherry and plum trees and all sorts of small fruits. As this or-



"PRAIRIE CHICKENS AND QUAIL WERE VERY COMMON IN THE AREA IN THE EARLY 1900'S"
(Reprinted from Iowa Bird Life, Dec. 1941)

chard was planted near the turn of the century, it had pretty well grown up when I got to know it best; by that time it was a haven for birds.

For shade trees, my father had gone to the brakes of the Missouri River, adjacent to the Mennonite settlement near Bon Homme, the original town-site of the early settlers who came to the county. These Mennonites were all friends of my father and they helped him get hackberry, elm, maple, ash, box-elder and red cedar trees. These he planted in the front yard where he also set out a buckthorn hedge. From the nursery he purchased catalpa, mountain ash and weeping mulberry trees. He must have had a green thumb, for in later years our yard was a fine shady place where, in its spacious confines, many church socials and lantern suppers were held.

To such a setting the birds came in numbers. As a small boy I knew the Baltimore Oriole and the Rose-breasted Grosbeak. There were usually two pairs of Orchard Orioles nesting in our orchard and I often climbed up to their nests amid great chattering on their part. In our plum thicket the Brown Thrashers and Catbirds were at home and everywhere we had Grackles, Robins and Mourning Doves. To the rear of our home was open pasture land with one or two swampy areas; here I got acquainted with the Killdeer and the Meadowlark. One day while wandering in the tall grass, I flushed an incubating female Marsh Hawk. Her shrill cries brought her mate and they gave me an unpleasant time until I got far away enough from the nest to suit them. In the big pasture we often chased Burrowing Owls into their dens, when we were on some expedition to drown out thirteen-lined ground squirrels or some similar project.

Emanuel Creek, said to have been named in honor of the Spanish Indian trader and explorer of the Missouri River, Emanuel or Manuel Lisa, was another place to study birds. This clear little stream was just a nice walk west of town and here, while fishing for suckers and bullheads, I learned to know the Phoebe and the Barn Swallows, which nested under the bridges. We also flushed Spotted Sandpipers and an occasional snipe from along the creek bed. On trips east of Tyndall near the Snatch Creek valley and on the Dunwoodie farm, one could find the Upland Plover. The Dunwoodie brothers loved this bird and kept it so well protected, that to this day it is still possible to find a pair or two of plovers on their meadow.

To the northeast of town were two of the small lakes mentioned above, and on occasional bullhead fishing trips to these spots, we learned to know the Black Tern, Coot, Pied-billed Grebe and a few of the summer ducks. On these trips we found the Dickcissel and some years great numbers of pretty black and white Lark Buntings.

My best friend in the neighborhood was an old gentleman named Murray Colburn, who lived across the street from us and who loved birds. He put up all sorts of bird-houses and an exceptionally large, fine martin house. He always had Purple Martins nesting there. On hot summer days he would set two or three pails of water on the ground near the house. The martins were panting in distress. They would swarm down to the pails and perch on the edges, then sort of dab into the water, but they never seemed to get a satisfactory drink. It was not until years later I learned that martins drink on the wing by using the lower mandible as a tiny scoop. The old bird-watcher could never figure it out, and day after day he would put out fresh pails of water, no doubt hoping that some day the martins would not be so foolish, and would learn to drink as his other bird friends did.

I was quite thrilled on occasion to find a Bluebird or an Indigo Bunting in our orchard, but my biggest boyhood thrill came late one fall afternoon. I happened to be out in the yard and just at dusk a large bird, evidently tired, came flopping down out of the sky from the north and landed, plop, on our roof. He looked over the situation and decided the ridge was a fine place to



WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH

An expert field observer, Mr. Youngworth has had an enormous number of hours in the field with birds. He has been one of our most faithful contributors to "Iowa Bird Life", beginning with an article in Vol. 1, No. 1. Upward of 80 of his articles have been published in our magazine — a total of more than 54 pages of valuable and interesting material on birds.

spend the night, so he pulled in his neck and settled down. I eased into the house for my bird books. It didn't take me long to decide I had a weary Black-crowned Night Heron for an overnight guest. I watched him until darkness reduced him to a black hump on the roof. In the morning my avian visitor was gone.

The summer that I turned eleven, I was hired by the Bon Homme County Engineer, John Wallace, to be his assistant rodman, chainman and general helper. Mr. Wallace was a kindly old Scotsman who paid me one dollar a day and my keep. The work opened up a new avenue for bird study, as we traveled up and down the county in an old Metz chain-drive automobile, which often stalled on a steep hill. When this happened it was up to me to jump out and push for all I was worth. Usually the sudden decrease in weight and my strenuous pushing would encourage the Metz finally to creep over the hill. Our work was laying out grades on county roads so the grading crews could come along later and bring the road up to proper height and width. In surveying we started from a section corner post buried in some weedy fence corner. It was my job to find these posts and then Mr. Wallace would come over and set up his instruments. I was continually disturbing nesting birds and I enjoyed my work no end.

One trip took us to Choteau Creek, which formed the western boundary of our county. Choteau Creek was steeped in history and was named for Auguste and Pierre Choteau, who were early-day explorers and Indian traders. The creek at that time was a large stream of clear water with numerous deep pools. I shall never forget how Mr. Wallace and I wallowed in those cooling waters in the heat of the summer afternoons.

The next summer Mr. Wallace again hired me, but that time we worked for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Company in laying out new townsites and adding to old ones in western South Dakota. That, however, was another chapter in my bird work.

The pleasures of bird-watching as learned by a small boy will probably stay with him through life. He will never make money watching birds and most of the neighbors will put him down as a bit queer, but the joy and pleasure of being out in the nature world and watching the various activities of the wild birds will more than repay for all the jeers and insults tossed by those uninitiated to bird study.

FIELD SPARROW LIFE HISTORY IN CENTRAL IOWA

By MALCOLM P. CROOKS and GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON

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Iowa State College
AMES, IOWA

From March 1947, through May 1948, we studied the Field Sparrow on a 31-acre idle pasture adjacent at the northeast corner of the Iowa State College Campus, Ames, Iowa. The ground-cover of the tract was upland prairie grasses and other herbs with invading bluegrass. Chiefly hawthorns and crab apples grew in the shallow valleys and on the hillsides, with a few taller, scattered elms. Woods, cropland, and pastures bounded the area. A small stream ran through it. As the Field Sparrow does not winter in Iowa, our winter observations dealt solely with nests and nest-sites. From June to September, 1947, we made full-time dawn-to-dark observations.

In 1947, Field Sparrows were seen first in the vicinity on April 5. Heavy, cold rains from April 5 to 19 apparently delayed migration, and most of the Field Sparrows arrived in the Ames area in the dry 10-day period, April 19 to 29. None of the eight birds we banded in 1947 was seen in 1948.

The territories of the males ranged in area from 0.75 to 2.0 acres, average 1.3 acres. Walkinshaw (1945) reported one to two acres per male Field Sparrow. Six of the 14 males remained mated throughout the season, five for part of the summer, and three were single all summer. All territories were on semi-wooded hillsides or lower land. Grasshopper Sparrows frequented the high, grassy land of the area.

Finding nests involved locating singing males. Unmated males usually sang fervently. When a male became mated his singing subsided for several days. Later, the song-intensity of males, whose mates were not nest-building or incubating, seemed to be about the same as that of unmated males. After locating a singing male, usually within 20 minutes we saw with him a female, whose actions often led us to a nest.

Female Field Sparrows did all the nest-building and usually started work 15-30 minutes before sunrise. Building activities, limited to forenoons, were especially intense during the first one to two hours of the day, with up to 25 trips an hour. In the spring nests usually were placed close to the ground in clumps of goldenrod or gromwell. From late May until the end of the nesting season, most of the nests were placed in low hawthorns. The average height of nests ranged upward monthly from 4 feet in May to 20 feet in July. Walkinshaw (1945) found the average height ranged from on the ground in May to 10 feet in June and 16 feet in July. A nest was usually built in three days, and five days was the longest period noted, probably lengthened by rainy weather. In two-week periods we noted nests under construction as follows: May 1-15, 7; May 16-31, 2; June 1-15, 5; June 16-30, 5; July 1-15, 7; July 16-31, 4. In total, 33 nests were found on the area. The first sign of nest-building was seen on May 8, and the last nest known to be built was started on July

28; nest-building thus extended over an 82-day period. Walkinshaw (1939) noted Field Sparrow nest-building in Michigan as early as April 25 and as late as August 25, though not in the same year.

The numbers of nests built in each Field Sparrow territory during the summer varied from one to five. The number of nesting attempts to a pair was influenced by the length of time the pair was mated as well as by the nesting success. The average was 4.0 nesting attempts for the pairs that remained mated for the entire summer. Because some birds were mated for a shorter time, the average for all mated pairs was only 2.75 nests. Five nests were built in each of two territories but only one nest in each of the areas was successful. There were from none to three successful nests in each territory, average 1.1; however, in the one instance of three broods raised, it is believed that all the young from the second nest died within a few days after leaving the nest.

All Field Sparrow eggs were laid in the early morning from 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after sunrise. Egg-laying usually began on the day following nest completion. One egg a day was laid until the clutch was complete, or the nest abandoned. Disregarding the number of Cowbird eggs, the average clutch in 17 nests was 2.65 eggs. Walkinshaw (1945) found an average of 3.37 eggs in a clutch.

The incubation period was found to be 11 days, with a half-day tolerance. Female Field Sparrows, without male assistance, incubated 70 percent of the observed time. A period at the nest varied from 20 to 63 minutes, average 33 minutes. Females left their nests for intervals of 6 to 25 minutes, average 14 minutes. On several occasions, the male came near the nest and chipped while his mate was incubating. In almost 70 percent of these instances, the female responded by flying to the feeding ground with him. Male Field Sparrows occasionally fed their mates on the nest, more often in the early part of incubation than near hatching time.

Based on the averages for three nests, the female spent 83 percent of the time brooding the young on the day of hatching. The brooding time decreased daily to zero on the seventh day. The male and female Field Sparrows divided the task of feeding the young about equally. The average number of trips per hour from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. increased from 3.7 to 12 as the young aged from one to seven days. Observations of food carried to the young in June, 1947, were made from a blind and showed larvae, mostly geometrid, 71 percent; adult fly and bee types, 16 percent; moths, mostly *Baptia vestaliata*, 10 percent; beetles, 3 percent. Jones (1913) also noted a high percentage, about 65 percent, of geometrid larvae in the young Field Sparrow's diet.

Sixteen nests of species other than the Field Sparrow found in the study area belonged to: Brown Thrasher, Indigo Bunting, Robin, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Grasshopper Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, and Eastern Goldfinch. Only one of these 16 nests, a Goldfinch nest, contained a Cowbird egg, and that nest was abandoned after the Cowbird egg was laid.

We saw the following species of birds attacked by mated and unmated male Field Sparrows: Dickcissel, Goldfinch, House Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Phoebe, Wilson's Warbler, Cowbird, Yellow Warbler. Female Field Sparrows were seen attacking only Cowbirds. In only one instance was a Field Sparrow noted being attacked by another species, a male Indigo Bunting.

Field Sparrows drove away single Cowbirds or groups of Cowbirds with equal vigor. Male Field Sparrows chased Cowbirds much more frequently than unmated males did, probably because the Cowbirds entered territories containing nests more frequently than territories of unmated males. The female sparrows often attacked the Cowbird and in a few instances seemed more aggressive than the males. Single female Cowbirds, apparently relying on entering a territory unseen, left readily when discovered. Male Cowbirds

rarely entered a Field Sparrow nesting territory without one or two females. When the Cowbirds were in a group, a Field Sparrow usually found it difficult to drive them off. In the attack, a sparrow usually made no physical contact with a Cowbird. Friedmann (1929) found little parasitism of Field Sparrow nests at Ithaca, New York, but mentioned that records showed them to be parasitised very heavily in some localities. The abundance of Cowbirds in the midwest (Friedmann 1929) may explain partially the much heavier parasitism of Field Sparrow nests in this study than nests that Walkinshaw (1945) observed near Battle Creek, Michigan. Walkinshaw found only one Cowbird egg laid in the 16 nests belonging to one male Field Sparrow and his mates over a period of six summers; however, he (1936) has written that of the 12 Field Sparrow nests found in 1935, four contained a total of six Cowbird and three Field Sparrow eggs.

Of 20 Field Sparrow nests in which it was possible to determine the status of parasitism in this study, 16 contained 29 Cowbird eggs. Freshly laid Cowbird eggs were found from early May until late July, but most of the egg-laying was completed by July 1. From each of seven nests one or more sparrow eggs were removed, presumably by Cowbirds less than a day before the Cowbird eggs were laid. Only three parasitised nests were known not to have sparrow eggs removed from them beforehand. In one instance, two Field Sparrow eggs were removed and one Cowbird egg was laid in a nest several days after incubation started. This is the only case in which more than one egg was removed for each Cowbird egg laid, and in which a Cowbird egg was laid after the beginning of incubation. One to four Cowbird eggs, average 1.8, were laid in each parasitised nest. The ratio of the number of Cowbird eggs laid to the number of Field Sparrow eggs laid in the 16 parasitised nests was 1:2. Friedmann (1929) in New York found that Cowbirds laid only one egg per nest in over two-thirds of the cases. We found that Cowbirds laid one egg in only one-third and two eggs in one-half of the nests used.

Of the 29 Cowbird eggs found in Field Sparrow nests, eight hatched, and of two young Cowbirds that left nests only one survived. Field Sparrows were fledged with both of the above Cowbirds. Forty-five percent of the loss of Cowbird eggs and young in the nests was due to nest abandonment, 26 percent is attributed to predators, 15 percent to an ice and snow storm, and 14 percent to unknown agents. Six of the unsuccessful Field Sparrows nests were abandoned because of the imposition of the Cowbird, and it is probable that three more nests were unsuccessful for the same reason. No obvious starvation of young Field Sparrows nor their loss from nests was noted as a result of the presence of young Cowbirds.

Seven young Field Sparrows disappeared from four nests in a period of 19 days, June 30 to July 18. The only evidence found to help identify the predator was the presence of a one-inch hole in the sides of two nests, which were within 10 inches of the ground. Predators were blamed for 24 percent of the loss of young Field Sparrows in the nests. Walkinshaw (1939) reported that predators were responsible for the loss of seven young sparrows from a total of 17 young that hatched.

Of sixteen young Field Sparrows that left nests, 10 survived until fall, and six were not seen after leaving nests. Two of the 10, and four of the six were banded. A House Wren, the only agent seen to destroy a Field Sparrow nest, which had two eggs, scratched and tore it apart in three minutes, after entering it at 5:30 a.m. The sparrows, not near at that time, did not return until several minutes after the wren flew away.

Probably the greatest harm done to the Field Sparrow population by weather occurred when a three day cold spell with snow, sleet and rain, and a low temperature of 31°F., came on May 28, 1947. The snow was deep enough

to fill nests and cover the ground. The three active Field Sparrow nests under observation at that time were abandoned. One nest contained four young Field Sparrows that were six and seven days old, nearly ready to leave the nest. Two nests containing a total of one Field Sparrow, three Cowbirds five to six days old, and one Cowbird egg, were covered with snow and abandoned. Two other nests with frozen eggs, found after the storm, were abandoned probably because of the snow. Only one young Field Sparrow, a fledgling, survived the storm in the area. No adults were lost.

In the 17 nests studied intensively 45 Field Sparrow eggs were laid, an average of 2.65 eggs per nest. In 10 of the nests 27 of the 45 eggs hatched and 16 fledglings were produced.

In summary, on a 31-acre idle semi-wooded pasture adjacent to Iowa State College, the Field Sparrow was studied from March, 1947, through May, 1948. The first Field Sparrow was reported in the vicinity on April 5, 1947, and the height of arrivals was between April 19 and April 29. Six of the 14 males remained mated for the entire nesting season, five for only part of the season, while three were single for the whole summer. Fifteen territories ranged from 0.75 to 2.0 acres, average 1.3 acres. The first nest-building was seen on May 8 and the last nest was started on July 28, 1947. Females built one to five nests in each territory, average 2.75. The incubation period was determined to be 11 days with a half-day tolerance. Nests, placed on or near the ground early in the season, were built progressively higher in trees to an average of 20 feet in July. The parents shared in feeding the young, which normally left the nest at the age of seven or eight days. Eighty percent of 20 Field Sparrow nests were parasitised by Cowbirds. Only one of the 16 nests of other species in the area contained a Cowbird egg. Of the 29 Cowbird eggs laid in Field Sparrow nests, eight hatched, and only one produced a surviving fledgling. Disregarding the number of Field Sparrow eggs removed by Cowbirds, causes of Field Sparrow egg losses in 17 nests were: weather, 35 percent; predators, 35 percent; Cowbird parasitism resulting in abandonment, 20 percent; human disturbance, 10 percent. A House Wren was seen to destroy a Field Sparrow nest containing two sparrow eggs. A sudden cold spell with rain, snow and sleet occurred on May 28. All nests in use at that time were abandoned, and seven young Field Sparrows, three young Cowbirds and one Cowbird egg were frozen at this time. In 17 nests, 45 Field Sparrow eggs were laid, 27 eggs hatched in 10 nests and 16 young birds left their nests. Ten survived until fall but six were not seen after they left their nests.

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THE 1952 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

Compiled by FRED J. PIERCE

One hundred enthusiastic bird students, at 20 places in Iowa, went out into rigorous winter weather during Christmas week to take part in the annual bird census. This event has become an important and popular one with bird people in all parts of the country—a fact that is borne out by the large number of persons who each year participate in the bird count.

"Iowa Bird Life" has been publishing tabulated Christmas bird censuses for 16 years. These censuses, presenting a very accurate picture of the winter bird life in from nine to 21 localities in the state, have much scientific value. The series probably will be worked over at some future time and a great deal of statistical data, such as population fluctuations and migration trends in relation to the weather, will be made available.

The 16 tabulations have the following figures. The first tabulated census was the one for Christmas of 1937, which was printed in 1938.

1937—50 species, 10 stations	1945—66 species, 20 stations
1938—58 species, 9 stations	1946—75 species, 15 stations
1939—75 species, 18 stations	1947—73 species, 19 stations
1940—69 species, 18 stations	1948—79 species, 18 stations
1941—65 species, 13 stations	1949—71 species, 19 stations
1942—39 species, 10 stations	1950—70 species, 17 stations
1943—62 species, 13 stations	1951—65 species, 21 stations
1944—57 species, 12 stations	1952—85 species, 20 stations

The average Christmas bird population for the 16 years is 66.2 species.

It will be seen from the above figures that the 1952 census produced the highest number of species in 16 years. Particularly interesting is the large number of ducks that remained up into December—indicating higher population of ducks of several species and more open water and food late in the season. The unusual number of wintering Song Sparrows will also be noted. Lack of space prevents comment on the many interesting records. No less than 25 species were seen at one station only; many of these are valuable records. Nearly a dozen species were seen at two stations only. Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch and Cardinal were the only birds reported at all 20 stations. The combined censuses make a fine index to the winter bird life of Iowa, and we recommend a careful study of the entire tabulation.

Data on place, time, weather and the observers who reported in the 1952 census are given below.

1. CEDAR FALLS (Snag Creek, Hartman Reserve, Goose Lake, Union Bridge, Josh Higgins Park; river bottoms 50%, upland forest 25%, savannas 15%; fields 10%). Dec. 21; 8 a. m. to 12:30, 1:30 to 4:30 p. m. Cloudy, hazy; 2 in. snow on ground; rivers mostly frozen over; no wind; temp. 26° to 33°; total hours, 6 on foot, 1½ by car, total miles, 15 on foot, 45 by car. Observers in one party. Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, Buelah Rugg, Gordon Grant, Stephen Tillet.

2. CEDAR RAPIDS (Cedar Lake, Shaver Park, Cedar River south, Sixth St. woods, Bever Park, Beverly). Dec. 31; 8:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Overcast; 3 in. crusted snow on ground; no wind; temp. 28° to 35°; 3 miles on foot, 56 by car. Observers together. Dr. Alfred Meyer, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane.

3. COGGON (Pike dooryard, 8 bird feeders, 1 block radius in town). Dec. 26; 7:45 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. Clear; light NW wind; temp. 9° to 18°. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pike, Robert Pike.

The Mockingbird which stayed about our place all winter was first seen on Nov. 1. It drank at the bird bath and made itself at home at once. We had several opportunities for pictures when the Mockingbird and a male Cardinal

ate together at the feeder, which is near our front door in a small elm tree. Several smaller birds waited their turn at the feeder. The Cardinal was the only species that the Mockingbird wouldn't drive away. The Mockers attacked and injured a Starling. During the Mockers' winter stay with us, we trapped and banded it; used a band furnished by M. L. Jones.—Mrs. Walter Pike.

4. DAVENPORT (Black Hawk State Park, Rock River at dam, Vandrouf's Island, Rock River marshes, Mississippi River at Hampton, Ill., Port Byron hills (all the preceding in Illinois), scattered urban areas in Davenport, Credit Island, Davenport Municipal Airport, Allen's Grove, Pinneo's Grove, Lock No. 14, Lock No. 15, Davenport levee, Duck Creek Park, Oakdale, Pine Hill and Memorial Park Cemeteries, Blue Grass and Walcott area, Mississippi River between Lock No. 14 and Le Claire; deciduous woodlands 35%, river shoreline 30%, open farmland 25%, coniferous woodland 5%, urban areas 5%). Dec. 21; 7:30 a. m. to 5 p. m. Overcast; scattered patches of old snow on ground; river open below dams, ice with many patches of open water above dams; wind WNW, 5-9 m. p. h.; temp. 30° to 35°; total party hours, 26 on foot, 78 by car; total party miles, 45 on foot, 660 by car. Seventeen observers in 7 parties. Leon Doering, Elton Fawks, David Fawks, Mrs. Floyd Gold, Jeanette Graham, Marion Hawes, Norwood Hazard, Kenneth and Jerry McConaughy, Tom Morrissey, Mr. and Mrs. Pete C. Petersen, Peter C. Petersen, Jr., R. Schropp, Mrs. E. L. Swain, Betty Swain, Don Swensson (Tri-City Bird Club).

White-winged Scoter identified by Elton Fawks; Franklin's Gull identified by Petersen, Jr. and Norwood Hazard.

5. DES MOINES (Waterworks, Glendale Cemetery, Crocker Woods, Morningstar, Wakonsa, Pine Hill Cemetery, Dove Woods, Fisher's Lake, Sycamore Park, Impounding Reservoir, Walnut Woods, Ashworth Park, Lovington, Idlewilde Ranch, Kinglet Woods; open fields 25%, wooded streams 60%, lakeside 15%). Dec. 27; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear; 3-7 in. snow on ground; some open water in streams and Reservoir; wind NW and S, 5-10 m. p. h.; temp. 5° to 21°; total party hours, 38 on foot, 13 by car; total party miles, 33 on foot, 101 by car. Twenty-three observers in 6 parties. Dorothy Anderson, Bruce Berger, Albert Berkowitz, Mrs. Ruth Binsfield, Woodward Brown, James Decker, Oliver Graves, Dick Hanson, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Haskell, Mrs. Schuyler Hunter, E. L. Kozicky, Olivia McCabe, George McGill, Mrs. Harold Peasley, Mary E. Peck, Mrs. Tom Pettit, Bruce Stiles, Jerry Stiles, Floy Vest, Mary Ellen Wartens, Mrs. Toni Wendelburg, Lynn Willcockson.

Mrs. Peasley saw two juncos which made a good case for Montana Junco or possibly one of the other subspecies; it was not a definite record since it was a sight identification. Description: head black, back brown, sides a soft pink, black head contrasting sharply with brown back and pink sides; observed at 10-15 yards at Sycamore Park.

6. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary Cemeteries, Eagle Point Park, City Island, Mississippi River sloughs in Wisconsin; open fields 10%, coniferous woodlands 15%, deciduous 40%, river sloughs 35%). Dec. 21; 7:30 a. m. to 12:30, 1:30 to 4:30 p. m. Cloudy; 1 in. snow and sleet on ground, ice on trees on ridges; river open below dam and about 5 acres above; no wind; temp. 27° to 32°; total hours, 7 on foot, 1 by car; total miles, 9 on foot, 10 by car. Observers together. Clifford Johnson, Ival Schuster, Mr. and Mrs. George Crossley.

7. DYERSVILLE (City limits to brushy woods 1 miles north; cornfield 20%, brushy timber 20%, weedy flood plain and creek banks 50%, city limits and scattered oak grove near farmstead 10%). Dec. 27; 3 to 4:20 p.m.

(Continued on page 18)

[illegible]

CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

17

	1. Cedar Falls	2. Cedar Rapids	3. Corkran	4. Davenport	5. Des Moines	6. Dubuque	7. Dyersville	8. Estherville	9. Fairfield	10. Iowa City	11. McGregor	12. New Providence	13. Ottumwa	14. Pine Hollow	15. Sioux City	16. Tama	17. Webster City	18. Winthrop	19. Woodward	20. S. Jefferson, Dak.
Hairy Woodpecker	2	5	1	29	15	8	1	1	8	13	10	11	2	1	9	2	7	3	4	4
Downy Woodpecker	6	10	4	66	76	8	1	6	8	13	10	11	2	1	9	2	7	3	4	4
Horned Lark				255	76	3		19												1
Blue Jay	6	19	5	118	50	12	3	6	1	18	19	12	11	12	10	11	4	7	1	1
Crow	75	67	5	366	141	23	16	42	1	29	5	18	1	15	9000	18	13	1000	51	6
Chickadee	25	35	5	99	239	12	3	12	11	28	17	29	15	8	104	12	13	2	6	15
Tufted Titmouse	4	9	2	38	78	5	1	2	8	12	8	4	4	3	10	12	13	4	4	3
White-breasted Nuthatch	10	12	3	44	66	5	4	2	3	12	8	9	4	5	12	10	8	3	3	6
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	3	12	8	9	4	5	12	10	8	3	3	6
Brown Creeper	3	1	1	21	18	9				2	5	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	3
Winter Wren	1			5						3	2	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	3
Prairie Marsh Wren										2	5	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	3
Mockingbird			1*							3	2	5	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1*
Robin				5	12					1	1	1								
Bluebird				33	1	23	1*			3	4	4								
Golden-crowned Kinglet																				
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	6	1	33	1	23	1*			3	4	4								12
Cedar Waxwing																				
Starling	45	162	1	1075	161	25	13	1		200	8	20	40	5	22	18	42	65		100
English Sparrow	100	180	50	1770	744	80	21	40		100	125	90	150	81	882	100	133	300	12	
Meadowlark				1	33											11	12	2		
Western Meadowlark																45				2
Red-winged Blackbird	1			101																
Bronzed Grackle	12	6	3	67	178	3	3	2	5	29	20	13	7	4	28	8	21	3	3	2
Cardinal				25	2			2		6		2	2							4
Purple Finch				78																
Common Redpoll	4									11		15								
Pine Siskin																				
Red-eyed Towhee																				
Arctic Towhee				47	57	1														
Goldfinch	4	1		47	57	1				10	10	10	50	6	10			50	5	
Slate-colored Junco				8	219	23*	18													
Tree Sparrow	50	46	2	665	139	26	1	75	11	11	23	32	20	19	580	4	62	4	10	60
Field Sparrow				2						200	45	22	5	48	380	3	11	5		50
Harris's Sparrow				2						3	3	2	2		75					1
White-crowned Sparrow	2																			
White-throated Sparrow				1	1															
Fox Sparrow				6	1															
Song Sparrow	5	6		25	61		12			3	3	10	6	3			5	3		4
Lapland Longspur								500												
Number of Species	29	36	17	52	55	27	20	17	8	39	16	27	21	22	30	15	21	25	21	21
Number of Observers	3	3	3	17	23	4	2	2	4	5	5	3	2	1	12	2	2	3	1	1

*See data under station in body of article.
 Total Iowa list 85 species.
 (Rusty Blackbird observed by Ennis at Mt. Vernon, would have made the total 86 species. The census was received too late for tabulation—see page 18.)

Overcast, misty haze with $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile visibility; snow crust on ground; no wind; temp. 26°; trip on foot. Mr. and Mrs. Emmett Polder.

The Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen at bird feeder at the start of trip. (Perhaps an injured bird that had been delayed in migration.—Ed.)

8. ESTHERVILLE (Fort Defiance and Gull Point State Parks, Emmet and Dickinson Counties; ducks seen in one large flock in water kept open by them in remote part of West Okoboji). Dec. 19; 8:30 to 11 a.m., 2 to 5 p.m. Cloudy; 8 in. of badly drifted snow on ground; temp. 16 at start; 4 miles on foot, 40 by car. Mr. and Mrs. Myrle L. Jones.

9. FAIRFIELD (Wooded area around Pond N. 1 of Fairfield Waterworks and adjoining cemetery). Jan. 1; 3 to 4:45 p.m. Cloudy, cold and damp. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Taylor, Faye Lawson, Floyd VonOhlen (Fairfield Bird Club).

10. IOWA CITY (City Park and river bottoms near by, Lake MacBride State Park, Swan Lake marsh; open farmland 45%, deciduous woodland 45%, coniferous woodland 10%). Dec. 26; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear; 1 in. crusted snow on ground; all water frozen except parts of river; wind W, 0-10 m.p.h.; temp. 24° to 31°; total party hours, 6 on foot, 4 by car; total party miles, 6 on foot, 70 by car. Observers together. Tom Kent, Fred Kent, Dr. and Mrs. P. P. Laude, James Ostdiek.

11. MCGREGOR (7½-mile radius centering on NE corner of Sec. 25-95-4, including part of Effigy Mounds National Monument and parts of Mississippi River, Yellow River and Sny Magill Creek bottoms; deciduous timber 20%, bottom land of weeds and brush 10%, open fields 70%). Dec. 27; 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear, 4-10 in. crusted snow on ground; waters partly open; wind NE to S, 1-2 m.p.h.; temp. 6° to 20°; 6 hours on foot, 3 by car; 7½ miles on foot, 49½ by car. Observers together. Oscar Allert, W. J. Kennedy, W. J. Kennedy, Jr., Wilfred D. Logan, Arthur J. Palas.

MOUNT VERNON (12-mile circle around city, including Muskrat Slough, Ivanhoe, Dark Hollow in Palisades-Kepler State Park). Dec. 27; 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear; main channel of Red Cedar River open, but Muskrat Slough frozen over; temp. 26°. J. Harold Ennis, David Ennis.

Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Marsh Hawk, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 14; Great Horned Owl, 1; Short-eared Owl, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 6; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Blue Jay, 8; Crow, 13; Chickadee, 5; Tufted Titmouse, 2; White-breasted Nuthatch, 5; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Starling, 17; English Sparrow, 67; Rusty Blackbird, 11 (well observed with 7x binoculars); Cardinal, 6; Slate-colored Junco, 4; Tree Sparrow, 78; Song Sparrow, 2. Total, 21 species.

(Unfortunately, the above list was not received until February 24—after the copy for the March issue had been sent to the printer and too late to be entered in our tabulation for the state.—Ed.)

12. NEW PROVIDENCE (general vicinity of Honey Creek, along 3½ miles of its length; deciduous woodland 70%, open fields, 25%, farmsteads, evergreen groves and yards 5%). Dec. 27; 8 a.m. to 12:15, 1:30 to 5 p.m. Clear; 5 in. snow on ground; streams frozen; wind W, 0-4 m.p.h.; temp. 0°-16°; 7 miles on foot, 10 by car. Observers together. Beth, Richard and Philip Clappitt.

The Red-eyed Towhee was seen by roadside among juncos and Song Sparrows; observed carefully under favorable conditions; reddish sides, white belly, white on wings and tail noted, also size and behavior.

13. OTTUMWA (Hamilton and Memorial Parks, City Cemetery, Central Addition, and drive north of city). Dec. 27; 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Clear; 1 in. snow on ground; no wind; temp. 17°-25°; 5 miles on foot, 4 by car. Charles E. Worley, Dale Putnam.

14. PINE HOLLOW STATE PARK (Dubuque County; list includes birds seen on trip from Farley to the Park and return). Dec. 27; 7:30 a.m. to 12.

Clear; 3 to 5 in. snow on ground, heavy ice on trees on the ridges; no wind; temp. 8° to 15°; about 4 miles on foot, 35 by car. George E. Crossley.

The Bluebirds and Red-headed Woodpecker were re-identified on Jan. 1 by both the Mr. and Mrs. Crossley. Species on the list but not seen within the park boundaries: Red-tailed Hawk (within park on Jan. 1), Ring-necked Pheasant, Red-headed Woodpecker, Meadowlark (seen feeding on newly-spread manure within 800 feet of boundary), English Sparrow, Song Sparrow.

15. SIOUX CITY (15-mile diameter; deciduous timber, hilly woodland and park area 40%, wooded streams and springs 15%, coniferous cemetery and park area 10%, marsh country 5%, open fields and open country 20%, city and suburban area 10%). Dec. 21; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy with light lowering and lifting fog; 6 in. snow on ground, and heavy frost covering everything; wind SE, 2-5 m.p.h.; temp. 12° to 28°; total party hours, 28 on foot, 4 by car; total party miles, 14 on foot, 65 by car. Twelve observers in 7 parties. Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Dr. J. E. Dvorak, Robert Dvorak, Willis Howard, Zell Lee, George Marsh, Jeanette Le Marsh, Bob Nickolson, L. J. Nickolson, Dr. and Mrs. John Schott, Carl Wellhausen (Sioux City Bird Club).

Prairie Falcon identified by Zell C. Lee.

16. TAMA (city, drive through Indian reservation and on highway 63 north and south). Dec. 26; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Clear; temp. 10°. Mr. and Mrs. W. G. MacMartin.

17. WEBSTER CITY (woods, fields and marshes along Boone River, Kendall Young Park, feeding station, and roadsides in city area). Dec. 29; 8:30 a.m. to 12, 1 to 4:30 p.m. Partly cloudy; 6 in. snow on ground; river and creeks open in a few places; light SE wind; temp. 24° to 35°; 5 hours on foot, 2 by car; 7 miles on foot, 32 by car. Dennis Carter, Heber Johnson.

18. WINTHROP (fields, woods and roadsides within a 10-mile circle). Dec. 28; 9 a.m. to 12, 1 to 4:15 p.m. Clear; 4 in. snow on ground with heavy crust of ice; trees and bushes covered with frozen sleet remaining from a storm of a week before; most of the countryside sealed under a mantle of ice and snow; brisk SW wind; temp. 12° at start, 15° at noon, 25° at return; 3 miles on foot, about 40 by car. Observers together most of the time. Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Pierce, Paul Pierce.

19. WOODWARD (fields, brushy fence-rows, draws along the timber about a mile from river). Dec. 26. Partly cloudy to clear; light NW wind; temp. 15° to 30°; 5 miles on foot, 15 by car. Richard A. Guthrie.

20. JEFFERSON, SOUTH DAKOTA (6-mile radius including Missouri River, Big Sioux River, McCook Lake, Conner Lake slough, Island School area, Goodenough Lake marsh, Loblolly Lake, Hunter Bridge areas). Dec. 21; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cloudy with light lowering and lifting fog; 6 in. snow on ground and heavy frost covering on trees, etc.; most water in marshes frozen, rivers frozen except for a few holes in Missouri River; wind SE, 2-5 m.p.h.; temp. 12° to 28°; 4 hours on foot, 1 by car; 4 miles on foot, 26 by car. W. R. Felton, Jr.

PRAIRIE MARSH WREN. The record of the Prairie Marsh Wren was made in a marsh area some 6 miles long and ½ mile wide in places. Many of this species nest here, and they sit right on the edge of my duck blind and whistle at me every morning in duck season. A road goes through the slough at one point, with a small bridge and running water beneath; below this was an open hole about 8 by 15 feet, where the wren came to drink and feed in the usual manner on Dec. 21. I was within 12 feet and looked at him with 6x30 binoculars. I also have a record for the same area on December 16, 1951. It was below zero on this date. I was walking on the ice across a rush-free area when a Prairie Marsh Wren flew across the open space. The bird was in poor shape physically and fell exhausted every time he flew 30 or 40 feet. I ran and tried to capture him, but he got to the rushes and eluded me though I got within inches of him several

times. These birds had longer tails than Winter Wrens and were positively identified. They were in their home grounds however out of season. They are very common in the area in the first half of November in most years.—W. R. Felton, Jr.

SPRING CONVENTION TO BE HELD AT MT. VERNON, MAY 16-17

The annual spring convention of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union will be held at Mount Vernon, May 16-17, on the Cornell College campus. Cornell College is this year celebrating its one hundredth birthday, and various organizations, including the Iowa Academy of Science, are by their presence helping the college observe its centennial.

Registration for the Iowa Ornithologists' Union convention will be open at 8 a.m. on Saturday, May 16, at Armstrong Hall. An interesting program of papers and movies is planned for both morning and afternoon on that day. The convention banquet will be held that evening. After a program at the banquet tables the convention will reassemble at King Memorial Chapel on the Cornell campus. An outstanding program has again been prepared for this occasion.

The field trips will start Sunday morning at 5 o'clock from the business district of Mount Vernon. The various groups will unite for noon lunch at the Palisades where the bird list for the day will be compiled. A complete program and additional information about the convention will be sent to each member in April. It is hoped that all members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union will attend this year.—J. H. E.

GENERAL NOTES

Bird Notes and Records, Late Fall and Winter of 1952-53.—COGGON. On Nov. 22 we had a female Evening Grosbeak at our bird bath. It drank several times then rested in a small tree by our front door for eight minutes. We had a perfect study of the bird.—MRS. WALTER PIKE.

DAVENPORT. An American Coot was seen Dec. 27 on the Mississippi River near the Bettendorf Bridge by Jerry McConoughy and the writer.—PETER C. PETERSON, JR.

DES MOINES. Birders of the Des Moines area have had some interesting winter visitors.

On Nov. 22, 1952, Mrs. Helen Peasley found two common Redpolls in the Camp Dodge area, apparently the first to be seen in the county in four years. During the following week or ten days several small flocks were seen in different localities and, by the end of the month, a flock of 75 to 100 was seen in Glendale Cemetery. These fed on the catkins of a stand of birches until the third week in January, when they left. This species is described by DuMont as a fairly rare winter visitors.

The most unusual find of the season was located Jan. 11, 1953, in the flowering crabapple trees in Waterworks Park, in the center of Des Moines. Albert Berkowitz and the writer were looking for Cedar Waxwings which frequently winter there when a strange three-note call was heard from the top of a nearby tree. In the tree was a Canadian Pine Grosbeak. The plumage was that of the immature male. The lone bird remained in the same locality, feeding on the frozen crabapples, and was still there on Feb. 15. It was seen by many local birders, and Dr. Peasley secured an excellent color film of the bird. This was shown at the February meeting of the Des Moines Audubon Society. The last recorded observation of this species in Polk County seems to have been in 1904.—WOODWARD H. BROWN.

GRUNDY CENTER. On Oct. 27 Pine Siskins came to my feeding station, and on Oct. 29 a Red Crossbill came. They were here for several days, and at times they fed on my window-shelf; this gave us (Mrs. Wallace Norman, Mrs. John Barlow and I) a perfect view of them. On Jan. 26, Mrs. Norman and I were most happily surprised to find a large flock of Redpolls feeding along the shore-line of Pine Lake, east of Eldora. This was our first sight of Redpolls and it was a thrill. We watched them feeding in a weed patch for almost two hours, and they came very close to us at times. The following day Mrs. Barlow came to see them, and again we watched them for some time at very close range.—MRS. J. RAY KING.

IOWA CITY. Besides the birds seen on our Christmas census, the following observations seem worthy of putting on record. Mallard, 1, Dec. 31; Harlan's Hawk, 1, Dec. 31; Sparrow Hawk, 2, Dec. 28; Bob-white, 20, Dec. 28; Mourning Dove, 15, Dec. 23; Short-eared Owl, 7, Dec. 25; Saw-whet Owl, 3, Dec. 24; Horned Lark, 200, Dec. 23; Cedar Waxwing, 12, Jan. 1; Northern Shrike, 1, Jan. 1; Meadowlark, 25, Jan. 10; Red-winged Blackbird, 63, Dec. 31; Bronzed Grackle, 6, Dec. 31; Pine Siskin, Dec. 21 and 31, Jan. 1.—FRED W. KENT.

IOWA CITY. Six Bluebirds were seen Jan. 4 in the woods along the Iowa River across from the Iowa City Power plant, by Elton Fawks, Don Swenson and the writer.—PETER C. PETERSEN, JR.

SIOUX CITY. The fall of 1952 was one of the mildest and driest ever recorded. One beautiful day followed another and bird watching was very interesting. The Harris Sparrows arrived in our yard on Oct. 6, and we recorded them daily, except for six days, until Dec. 20, when a blanket of 9 inches of snow sent them farther south. They seemed to feed mostly on weed seeds in the garden, and apparently on crab-grass seed in the lawn. Song Sparrows were seen in the garden on Oct. 22, Nov. 14, and the last time on Dec. 4. American elm trees in the Sioux City area seemed more diseased than usual in 1952. Perhaps this was the reason for the large numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets and the extensiveness of their visit. The first ones appeared on Oct. 14, and from then on were seen daily except for seven days until Dec. 31. They seemed to feed mainly on elm trees where they were no doubt picking up eggs and larvae of the various web worms, canker worms, bark lice and other pests that have been infesting our trees in this region.—WM. YOUNG WORTH.

WATERLOO. My white snow parka was probably responsible for a fortunate encounter with a Sharp-shinned Hawk on Jan. 1. I was working my way along Black Hawk Creek and came upon a small stretch of open water near some very heavy brush. Juncos and Tree Sparrows were here in abundance, and a flock of blackbirds were enjoying a drink. Across the stream were Chickadees, Goldfinches, Creepers, Kinglets, Purple Finches, Nuthatches, Flickers and Downies. As I moved through a fence a hawk darted into a tree suddenly; it was directly in front of me and about 40 feet away. I expected it to fly away at once but apparently it didn't see me in my white parka. Its rusty breast, straight tail and small size told me it was a Sharp-shin. I remained motionless as the bird sailed down lower into the tree. This caused a great commotion among the sparrows and juncos. The Sharp-shin fluffed its feathers and preened itself for some time but made no effort to pursue the small birds. Some shots sounding from across the river caused the bird to jerk and appear ready to fly but it did not. It soon flew to a post in the fence row and this gave me a good look at its spread tail. I was tired of standing motionless so long and took a step forward, whereupon the hawk discovered me and flew away.—RUSSELL M. HAYS.

WOODWARD. Short-eared Owls were quite numerous in the locality during the fall and winter. I saw five at one time in the fall, and single

birds on many different occasions; one was seen 10 miles south of here on Jan. 12. I saw Cedar Waxwings on Jan. 12, the first time I had seen them in about a month. Harris's and Song Sparrows came to my feeding station in early January, and Bluebirds were seen during the week of Jan. 4-10. Three Bluebirds seemed to be trying to spend the winter here.—RICHARD A. GUTHRIE.

"The Birds of Wisconsin" Available in Reprint Form.—The original "Birds of Wisconsin", by L. Kumlein and Ned Hollister, published in 1903 by the Wisconsin Natural History Society, has been out of print for many years. With the upsurge of interest in bird study in Wisconsin during the last decade, the book has been much in demand with almost no copies available. The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology decided to reprint the book. This was done in installments in its official organ, "The Passenger Pigeon", during 1948-1951. The lapse of 45 years made it desirable to revise the list somewhat, as well as to give the additions to the state list during the period of years. The revision was expertly done by A. W. Schorger, and the additional information is bracketed after each species in the body of the list. The reprint is a nicely produced book of 128 pages, with portraits of Kumlein and Hollister. It is sold in two bindings. The cloth binding is \$2.75, and paper binding is \$2.00. Copies may be obtained from N. R. Barger, 4333 Hillcrest Drive, Madison 5, Wisconsin.—F. J. P.

Sage Thrasher in Iowa: A Sight Record.—My biggest problems in bird identification are to keep my imagination from filling in diagnostic characteristics not present and my willingness to explain away or ignore slight points of identity that refuse to fit into the pattern. I have had these weaknesses brought home to me on more than one occasion, but there must be some perverse and unscientific little quirk to my nature that seems to insist that I do not learn the lesson easily.

On December 20, 1952, many birds were frequenting the multiflora rose hedge that surrounds my back yard. In the afternoon I saw a bird run along the ground much in the fashion of a Robin. The bird seemed too small for a Robin, but I got a glimpse of white in the tail as it alighted for an instant on a post. The next day I saw it again, this time more distinctly and for a longer period of time. It definitely was too small for a Robin. Now I could see its streaked breast distinctly, but I could not see the white that I previously saw in the tail. It flew away, and in my imagination I had about made a Fox Sparrow out of it. On seeing it again the next day I got a clear view of the bill, which was long and narrow. That ruled out any of the sparrows.

I knew that Hermit Thrushes had been recorded here in the winter, and that seemed to be most logical now. The size was about right, and I could stretch my imagination far enough to include the breast markings, but the red tail just wouldn't fit in. At about this point I was convinced that the bird was not one of our common winter birds.

On December 22 I saw it at about 10 feet and one of its tail feathers was coming out. It was askew and I knew the bird would lose it soon. What I thought was white in the tail could have been only the loose feather as it turned, exposing the under side. Now I was trying to make a Gray-cheeked Thrush out of it.

On December 27 we had our Christmas bird census, and Dr. Edward L. Kozicky, (leader of the Iowa Cooperative Research Unit) came down from Ames. We both watched the strange bird for some time but left for the trip without having identified it. It stayed around and I saw it almost every day. Many times I was able to get within 10 feet of it. Again and again I had seen white in the tail and I no longer could rule this out. Now

I was trying to make a Townsend's Solitaire out of it. This fit quite well for size and tail and general coloration, but the breast striping was just a bit off base. I wanted to check more closely on immature and winter plumage.

The next day I saw the eye in good light and at close range. It was yellow. I called Mrs. Peasley and asked her to check some plates in bird guides and she reported that the Sage Thrasher had a yellow eye. I went over my own plates and literature and certainly that was it. I went outside and checked every point carefully with the bird. It had given me a hard time of it. It was the Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*, Fourth edition A.O.U. Check-List).

New species for the Iowa list do not come frequently. Jack Musgrove collected a Pacific Loon three years ago and the writer collected a Glaucous Gull more than ten years ago. We added the Lewis's Woodpecker some five years earlier.

This may be the first sight record of the Sage Thrasher east of the Missouri River. Unfortunately, it was not collected. After an unsuccessful attempt on January 10, 1953, I did not see it again.—BRUCE F. STILES, State Conservation Director, Des Moines, Iowa.

An Observation on a Late Ring-necked Pheasant Brood.—While engaged in censusing the Eastern Bob-White population on the 7713-acre Decatur County Research Area, a female Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) was observed on October 24, 1951, with a brood of six young pheasants, which were about four weeks old. The hen and young were flushed and counted by the author on the A. Kegg farm, Clay Township, Decatur County. By using an average incubation period, 23 days, and clutch of eggs, 11, the nest from which the young hatched was estimated to have been started about August 22, 1951, a late date for pheasant nesting. The nest probably represented the third or fourth reneesting attempt by the female. Of interest, also, were the six young, a high number for a late brood.—E. L. KOZICKY, Iowa Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Department of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

Pileated Woodpecker in Buchanan County.—On the afternoon of September 4, 1952, while Robert Cleary and I were on the Wapsipinicon River 2 miles northwest of Independence, we suddenly heard a great commotion in the trees overhead. There were loud, excited squeals. We looked up and saw a Sharp-shinned Hawk hot in pursuit of a Pileated Woodpecker. The aggressive act continued for about 15 seconds while the hawk made repeated dives at the woodpecker, which squealed loudly and flew from tree to tree. After having evidently shaken the pursuer, the woodpecker and its assailant were soon out of sight.

This was my fifth record for this species in Buchanan County, but I am sure that it is present here fairly commonly in the timber along the Wapsipinicon River. It is seldom seen due to its secretive habits. In the above instance we would not have suspected its presence had it not been for the attack by the Sharp-shin.—FRED J. PIERCE, Winthrop, Iowa.

Recent Publications.—Among the smaller books there are several that we should like to mention briefly. The Blue Heron Press, Box 236, Bronxville, N. Y., has published two attractive booklets entitled, respectively, "Birds of the Everglades" and "Birds of Massachusetts". They were written by Henry H. Collins, Jr., and have a good deal of useful information compressed into 16 pages each. There are several colored plates (most of them taken from the Peterson Field Guides), numerous line drawings by Roger Tory Peterson, and other illustrations. The listed price is 25c a copy, minimum orders \$1.00.

The Audubon Society of the District of Columbia (Box 202, Benjamin Franklin Station, Washington 4, D. C.) reprinted, 1952, several articles from the "Atlantic Naturalist" under the title of "The Potomac Valley—History and Prospect." It is in booklet form, 44 pages of interesting reading with a dozen or more appropriate illustrations. In five chapters by John Ely Briggs, Bernard Frank, Walter Slavik, Francis M. Uhler, Edward N. Munns, and Irston R. Barnes the region is very thoroughly covered, both from the historical angle and present-day features. A little space is given to ducks and their food, and there are eloquent pleas for conservation of the remaining natural resources. Iowa visitors to the National Capital will find the booklet of considerable value. It is sold for 75c a copy.

Those who remember the late Dr. Dayton Stoner as an Iowa resident, or who know his wife, Lillian C. Stoner, one of our members, will be much interested in a new book, "Birds of Washington Park, Albany, New York", published by the New York State Museum under their joint authorship. The book has 268 pages and 50 fine photographs. There is a good description of the physical features of the park, and a discussion of the seasons and conditions which affect the bird population. Most of the book is given over to the list of 127 species recorded for the park. Nearly every species is described at considerable length. It is very readable and a contribution to the ornithology of New York state in general and to the Albany region in particular. Mrs. Stoner did most of the writing of the book, and made use of her husband's records. In style and make-up it very much resembles the Roosevelt Wildlife Bulletins on birds published at Syracuse. The book may be obtained from the New York State Museum, Albany N. Y., for \$1.60 a copy.—F. J. P.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

News items about our members often come indirectly and much delayed. We are always interested in what our members are doing, and especially in their vacation trips. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Johnson visited Florida during the second half of December. They went on a one-day scheduled Audubon Trip on December 23, and saw many Roseate Spoonbills among various interesting birds. A card mailed from Miami gave only brief information but suggested a very fine vacation trip.

Dr. F. L. R. Roberts, former President of our Union, now of Corona, California, is publishing a series of articles called "I Smile When I Remember" in the "Jackson County Pilot" of Jackson, Minnesota. The articles, well written and entertaining, are in the form of reminiscences of Dr. Roberts' boyhood at Jackson. We should like to see these anecdotes collected and preserved in a more formal publication.

A noteworthy fact is that "Iowa Bird Life" will this year go behind the Iron Curtain of Russia. We have received a subscription from Filial Biblioteki, Akademii Nauk SSSR, in Moscow.

The Tri-City Bird Club, of Davenport, will be host to the annual convention of the Illinois Audubon Society on the week-end of April 18 and 19. There will be field trips on both mornings in Iowa and Illinois, and an indoor session will be held in Davenport Public Museum auditorium on the afternoon of the 18th. The two organizations will have a dinner that evening in Davenport. We believe that this is the first time an Illinois bird society has ever met in our state, and it will be a fine opportunity for many of our members in eastern Iowa to go to Davenport and get acquainted. The Illinois group have expressed a desire to meet some of the Iowa people. The Tri-City Bird Club cordially invites all those within driving distance to come to this meeting. One of the field trips will be to the Thompson-Savanna area to see migrating ducks and geese. Further details may be obtained by writing the Club in care of the Davenport Public Museum, 704 Brady Street.